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More Floridians than Ever Are Buckling Up

~Florida Achieves Record Safety Belt Usage Rate~

TALLAHASSEE – Safety belt use in Florida increased 2.2 percent in 2010. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Secretary Stephanie Kopelousos and Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) Executive Director Julie Jones announced today that statewide safety belt use reached a record 87.4 percent this year following the 2010 *Click It or Ticket* safety belt campaign.

“Safety belts save lives,” Kopelousos said. “Wearing a safety belt is the best way to stay safe in a crash. We want everyone to remember to buckle up – every time and every trip.”

Florida’s primary safety belt law, adopted in 2009, is a critical piece of the educational and awareness initiatives spread through media and grassroots efforts across the state.

A recent study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed that primary safety belt laws and enhanced safety belt enforcement programs, such as *Click It or Ticket*, are proven, effective strategies to prevent motor vehicle crash injuries and deaths.

“Florida’s primary safety belt law has led to greater safety belt usage, fewer injuries, and fewer deaths from vehicle crashes,” Jones said. “Our state troopers and law enforcement officers statewide are committed to making a difference through both education and enforcement.”

The Preusser Research Group documented observed seat belt use in Florida vehicles following the *Click It or Ticket* campaign from May 24 to June 6.

The results showed that Florida’s safety belt usage rate reached an all time high with only four of the 12 surveyed counties experiencing slight declines. Many surveyed counties achieved increases between 2.5 percent and 9.8 percent.

Pickup truck drivers and their passengers continue to be among the lowest users.

The full 2010 safety belt usage final report is available on the FDOT website: <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety>. For more information about *Click It or Ticket*, please visit www.clickitfla.com and follow the *Click It or Ticket* campaign on Twitter: @ClickItFla.

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